

Old Aberdeen Community Council

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 21st October 2008 at Old Aberdeen Town House.

1. Present

Graham Abraham, Hilda Meers, Cllr Jim Noble, Hamish Mackay, Katja Brittain, Shona Mutch, Cllr Richard Robertson, Michael Sutcliffe, Trevor Stacke, Clive Kempe, John Bowman, Angus Donaldson (Aberdeen University), PC Steven McKenzie, Dewi Morgan, Simon Barker (Vice-Chair), Christine Burgess (Chair), Kevin Guyan (Secretary).

Apologies

Isobel Aitken, David Hutchison, Gordon Mutch, Morag Paterson, Cllr Norman Collie, Helen Rushmore, Duncan McKay (AUSA).

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

Christine Burgess welcomed everyone and introduced the Council's new secretary, Kevin Guyan.

The minutes for September's meeting were approved.

The Neighbourhood Action Plan would not be discussed as the final draft has not been released. The issue will be discussed at November's meeting.

The Dunbar Hall building work is now complete and is on schedule to open mid to late November. A cheque for £10,000 has now been sent off from ACC to the Dunbar Hall Trust, moving the project on. CB highlighted that there is a substantial amount of money available to spend on the hall, possibly on a commercial dishwasher and kitchen utensils.

Toilet block on the High Street. Cllr Richard Robertson had nothing to report.

CB expressed her thanks to Dewi Morgan for producing the latest edition of the newsletter and continuing the upkeep of the website. The volunteers who helped deliver the newsletter were also thanked.

3. University Update

Angus Donaldson had nothing to report.

Simon Barker asked whether the issue of late-night noise from Elphinstone Hall had been investigated. AD explained that the venue is licensed until 1am but rarely goes beyond midnight.

There is nothing to report in relation to Dunbar Hall.

The planned Coffee Shop on the High Street is going ahead as planned.

Katja Brittain asked what the plans for the gym complexes were after the completion of the sports village. AD explained that the Pavilion will continue to be used as changing facilities and the Butchart Centre will be held by the University, possibly being used for arts projects.

4. Police Update

- (a) PC Steven McKenzie explained that the previous month has been fairly quiet. There have been 53 incidents within the area, with 6 of note and 2 priority crimes. One involved an attempted theft on the Chanory; the other involved a couple tricking their way into an elderly person's home and attempting to steal items. The couple are now in custody.
- (b) There have been no reports relating to Seaton Park. The area is currently being patrolled by plain clothed officers.
- (c) SM addressed the question of the parked cars on the private dirt track off the Chanory. The police have investigated the problem but are unable to act as the road is private.
- (d) SM distributed a leaflet advising students of the safest route between Hillhead and the University. This leaflet is currently being displayed around the University campus. AD added that talks with First over the possibility of extending the times of the number 20 bus were disappointing, with financial problems ruling out the idea. Cllr Jim Noble also explained that lighting on Don Street is still to go ahead, with the money now secured. Shona asked about the possibility of students being reminded by email of the dangers of walking through Seaton Park at night. **ACTION:** CB to discuss this with Duncan McKay.

Hilda Meers asked how this area's figures compare with the city. SM explained that there are small pockets of criminal activity but, overall, the area has a low crime rate.

5. Planning Update

Nothing to report.

6. Controlled Parking Zone

Clive Kempe raised concern over the potential demand for off-road parking after the introduction of the Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ). JN explained that this will be treated the same as all other planning applications by Aberdeen City Council (ACC).

Cllr Richard Robertson explained to the council that the report for the Central Committee Meeting in November has been prepared. RR also highlighted the impact of CPZ on areas outwith the zone (particularly Seaton and Tillydrone) who will see an influx in parked cars.

CB noted that a letter has been submitted to ACC expressing the council's unhappiness over the simplistic consultation process. CB also asked whether discussions between the University and ACC were still ongoing. AD explained that, for financial reasons, they were.

Dewi Morgan asked both councillors the line they plan to take at November's meeting. RR approves of the CPZ but not the proposed £50 permits for residents. JN agrees, in principle, but is still to see the final document.

HM asked what justification this area would have for free parking permits. SB explained that similar schemes in Foresterhill and Garthdee have both offered free permits to residents. He added that the conservation needs of this area must be taken into consideration throughout this process.

7. Neighbourhood Community Action Plan

Nothing to report.

8. Boundaries

CB has received maps of the new neighbourhood and community council boundaries. It is hoped that these changes will better align the two. CB also noted that the Wallace Tower is now within the council's area and there may be a need to consider its use. JN explained that ACC are hoping to task someone with finding a use for the tower and will keep us informed on progress.

9. Heritage Walk

Graham Abraham attended a meeting with the Historical Society and discovered the cost of the heritage walk would be around £40,000. He is

hoping to arrange a meeting with the forestry commission to see if any costs can be reduced. GA also attended a meeting with an ACVO representative specialising in community projects.

HM commended the accessibility element of the core path scheme, believing this to be a key concern to many elderly and disabled citizens.

10. Treasurer's Report

The treasurer was unable to attend.

11. Data Protection

DM showed the council a presentation on the current issue of data protection. It was explained that OACC is required to register and no councils are exempt from this procedure. **ACTION:** DM to speak to Charles Lowe to assess how other councils are addressing this issue.

12. Correspondence

- (a) An invite to Neighbourhood Services Central Area Priority Event. Hamish Mackay highlighted that he will be attending this event.
- (b) National Postal Ballot on Community Councils.
- (c) Community Council Forum Meeting and information on changes to the Small Improvement Fund.
- (d) Information on the Housing Land Release.

13. AOCB

HMa explained that there is a general feeling in the community that Seaton Park is underused and is hoping to acquire funding from the Scottish government's Regeneration fund to aid the repair and redevelopment of riverside paths. HMa suggested applying for funding to get a professional to produce a report on the park. The council agreed this was a good idea. **ACTION:** SB kindly offered to complete the application form, with the assistance of HMa. JN added that he hopes to organise a meeting with those involved with the park in the New Year.

17. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held at 7.30pm on Tuesday 18th November 2008 in the Old Town House.